



NEWS RELEASE

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SUBJECT: Dairy expands environmental efforts through Green Tier program

MADISON, Wis. – [Holsum Dairies](#) of Hilbert, one of Wisconsin's largest dairy farms, is recognized by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources as one of the first participants in the state's new Green Tier program. The farm commits to improving its nutrient management and storage as well as protecting surface and groundwater.

Green Tier is a new program for environmentally responsible businesses in Wisconsin, and the first program of its type in the nation. Qualified businesses and associations make legal commitments to superior environmental performance through contracts and charters negotiated with the DNR.

In exchange, these businesses are given incentives to achieve their environmental goals. Green Tier makes it easier for good environmental actors to perform even better, allowing the DNR to focus on facilities that need to meet environmental requirements.

"Wisconsin's dairy industry is a critical part of our economy," says DNR Secretary Scott Hassett. "Holsum is an innovative dairy that wants to achieve superior environmental performance, and tie it with their business performance. Their participation in the Green Tier program will help them develop systems that protect our waterways and groundwater."

Under its charter, over the next year Holsum Dairies will systematically evaluate all environmental aspects of its operations as it develops an environmental management system (EMS). The formal EMS helps assure superior environmental performance.

"We want to demonstrate to other farms and our neighbors that environmental performance is linked to economic performance. Participating in Green Tier will help us let others know what we are achieving," said Kenn Buelow, manager of Holsum Dairies.

Holsum Dairies is a 3,700-head, large-scale dairy farm in Hilbert, located in Calumet County in eastern Wisconsin between Lake Michigan and Lake Winnebago.

“Holsum Dairies is one of the first innovators to prove the business case for manure digester technology coupled with electricity production,” says Mary Schlaefter, DNR executive assistant. “Their technological leadership is invaluable.”

Holsum Dairies is participating at the program’s Tier 1 entry level. Tier 1 companies are generally environmental innovators with proactive management teams that are building systems needed to maintain and exceed environmental standards.

Benefits for Green Tier participants include specific flexibilities outlined in statute or individual contracts and charters, a single point-of-contact at DNR to aid communications, and use of the Green Tier logo for marketing. The DNR will recognize participants for superior environmental performance with a numbered certificate. The Green Tier program also offers limited deferred civil enforcement. Companies conducting inspections and reporting violations as discovered will not be fined for their actions provided that corrective actions are undertaken within an agreed upon time.

In addition to Holsum Dairies, state and business officials welcomed several other companies into the Green Tier program today at stops during bus tours involving participating facilities. One charter was signed with Environmental Compliance Corporation for Development and Economic Vitality, Inc., which represents residential developers affiliated with the Wisconsin Builders Association. Another charter was signed with Cooperative Compliance Program, Inc. of the scrap metal recycling industry. A Tier 2 contract was signed with MEGTEC Systems, Inc. of De Pere and one other Tier 1 participant was accepted into the program: American Transmission Company (ATC), headquartered in Waukesha.

The bus tour was part of a statewide event highlighting Green Tier which was jointly sponsored by the University of Wisconsin-Madison La Follette School of Public Affairs in cooperation with the Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Project, Wood Communications Group and Wisconsin Environmental Initiative (WEI) and the Department of Natural Resources.

For more information about Green Tier, visit the DNR Web site at dnr.wi.gov
At the top of the page select the A to Z button, click on “G” and select “Green Tier.”

Note to Editors: *Photos from the signing events will be posted on the above site by Tuesday afternoon.*